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When pain with neuropathic characteristics is truly neuropathic?

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NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST TO DECLARE

Objectives

- To recognize pain with neuropathic characteristics
- To discriminate when this type of pain has a truly neurological cause

Key message

The anatomical distribution of the Clinical manifestation is the most important element to diagnose neuropathic pain

Definition of Neuropathic Pain. IASP, 1994

“Pain initiated or caused by a primary lesion or dysfunction in the nervous system”

Neuropathic pain. Redefinition and a grading system for clinical and research purposes. Treede et al. *Neurology* 2008;70:1630–1635

“Pain arising as a direct consequence of a lesion or disease affecting the somatosensory system.”

Pain with neuropathic characteristics.

- Spontaneous pain:
 - Burning
 - Stabbing
 - Pins and needles
 - Muscular
- Stimulus induced pain:
 - Allodynia
 - Hyperalgesia
 - Dysesthesia (“weird sensation”)
 - Tinel sign

Pain with neuropathic characteristics.

Associated findings

- Cutaneous hypoesthesia:
 - pinprick
 - tactile
 - Postural
 - cold and warm
- Formicant paresthesias
- Muscle weakness
- Autonomic findings:
 - Orthostatic Hypotension
 - Vasodilation or vasoconstriction